New Stories of
THE MYSTERIOUS WAYS OF

WANG FOO

By SIDNEY C. PARTRIDGE

II.---The Phantom Junk

ALL was bustle and confusion at the wharf of the China Mutual Navigation Co. in Shanghai on the July afternoon that the good ship "Tien Pao" was taking on her passengers and cargo for Ningpo. And when we say "confusion," we don't mean the orderly American kind that we are accustomed to, but the real Chinese variety, which is a very different thing. To the ordinary visitor from Western lands it was simply pandemonium let loose. Coolies were rushing in every direction with bags of rice and beans and compradores (or "overseers") were shrieking to them at the top of their lungs. Native passengers were pushing and jostling each other in mad efforts to get aboard and only the huge nets spread out on either side prevented their falling overboard into the river. The only quiet spot seemed to be the little forward gangway where a few European passengers were climbing up to the cabins especialy reserved for them.

Ching, the first Pilot, was on police duty here with a long bamboo to indicate forcibly to the Asiatics that "East is East and West is West" and that they belonged only on the after part of the steamer. Order soon came out of chaos as the whistle blew for the departure. Captain Clarke—ever popular with his European passengers—took his place on the deck just in front of the wheel-house, Ching pulled in the little gang-plank and shut the gate, and with the order "Let her go!" the chains rattled along the sides and the "Tien Pao" swung out into the stream.

She had been an old P. and O. Coaster in her better days and was certainly the worse for wear, but she was holding her own with the larger and finer liners because of the significance of her name—which with the Chinese meant everything. "Tien Pao" or "Heavenly Protection" was their great guarantee of safety and it was a lucky day for her owners when those great golden characters were painted on her sides. Even the hundreds of little red paper slips which were tossed into the stream as she churned up the foam could add but little as offerings to the river ghosts when high heaven had her under its benign protection.

Down she steamed between the two long lines of shipping. Over the Heosung Bar and out into the yellow waters of the great Delta of the Yang Tze, the father of Chinese waters, and took her course southward toward the Islands of Poo Too. All went well until just after the hour of dinner when she started to enter the Black Camel Channel and sighted straight ahead the warning beacon on the cliff near the dangerous reef known to navigators as the "Camel's Hump." What happened to her there—in spite of the protection of the heavenly name—was told in the "Extra" issued early the next morning by the Shanghai Daily News.

"EXTRA

Serious Maritime Disaster—The Ningpo Liner 'Tien Pao' a Total Loss on the Poo Toos.

"The S. S. 'Wing Pao' of the Coast Mutual Navigation Co. arrived this morning early, bringing the officers and passengers of the S. S. 'Tien Pao' of the same line, which went hard and fast onto the 'Camel's Hump' Tuesday evening, while trying to avoid a collision with a large Ningpo junk.

"Although a strong ebb tide was running at the time, her passengers and mails were safely landed in the ship's boats near the Hai Toy beacon where the native officials did everything in their power to make them comfortable until the returning steamer was signalled and took them off the following day.

"Captain and Mrs. Gerald Duncan of Melbourne and the Misses Jones of the English Church Mission School, at Hangchow were the only European passengers on board. They speak most highly of the conduct of Captain Clarke and his officers, who did everything possible to allay excitement and to insure the rescue of the Chinese passengers and who never left the ship until the very last one had been safely landed."

Not very many days after the above "extra" things had settled down again to their usual routine in the maritime circles of the Settlement at Shanghai and the morning issue of the Daily News announced to the world that a Court of Enquiry would assemble at His Britannic Majesty's Consulate on the first day of August to investigate the loss of the Coast Mutual Navigation Co.'s S. S. "Tien Pao" on the "Camel's Hump" and that said Court would be made up of the following officers, viz: Captain, the Hon. George R. Wemyss, of H. M. S. "Rainbow"; Captain Lewis M. Pilsbury of the Blue Funnel liner "Achilles" and Pilot John A. Mosely, Senior of the Lower Yang Tze Pilots' Association.

Under ordinary circumstances the sessions of the Court and the verdict they would render would not have attracted a very great amount of attention. Sea-faring men up and down the Coast would have talked it over and commented upon the fairness or unfairness of the judgment and Captain Clarke's personal friends would have given him their usual sympathy and then the circumstances of the wreck would one by one have dropped out of the public's mind—just as the timbers and planks of the old "Tien Pao" were dropping into the waters of oblivion with every rising tide that broke over the "Camel's Hump." But the circumstances, on the contrary, were of such an extraordinary nature that before the Court had been in session a week the "Tien Pao" wreck and the very mysterious testimony and surroundings were the universal subject of conversation from one end of the town to the other! It was not only discussed at all the Clubs and Afternoon-Teas, but it got into the native papers and compradores and coolies alike enjoyed whole columns of it over the pipes and tea-bowls. They called it "The Strange Story of the Devil-Boat," but Mrs. Walpole, the wife of the British Consul, had most felicitously named it "The Mystery of the Phantom Junk" and this happy title helped to extend the circulation even further than it might otherwise have gone.

What was this "Mystery" and why was the junk called a "Phantom"? Listen! The testimony of Captain Clarke, under direct examination and under cross-examination, was perfectly clear and distinct—nothing could be more so. In a very condensed form, it was simply this: Just before eight bells on the evening of Tuesday, July 11, he was standing on the forward deck of the steamer, right in front of the wheel-house and was talking to Captain and Mrs. Duncan, when he noticed a bank of fog settling over the outer Loo Choo Islands and working its way rather quickly toward the "Black Camel Channel," through which the ship would soon have to pass. He excused himself to his passengers and entering the wheel-house sent Jackson the first mate, down to his supper and himself took charge of the course, with Ching and Chang, the Chinese pilots (known on board as "Dead-Eye" and "The Admiral"), at the wheel. They kept on their regular "So'-West by West, half West" with the Hai Toy beacon straight ahead, although the strong ebb was drawing them a little nearer the cliff than usual, when the fog seemed to settle right across the southern half of the Channel and they changed the course a half a point to give the "Camel's Hump" a generous margin.

Suddenly, without a moment's warning of horn or gong or bell, a great black junk appeared on the starboard bow, driving at full speed with every sail of matting set and headed directly for the "Tien Pao." There was only one chance to avoid the collision and Clarke took it. "Hard-a-starboard," he shrieked to Dead-Eye and the Admiral, and they threw the wheel over like old and experienced helmsmen. "Away over with it," as he pulled with all his strength on the whistle handle and sent out the danger signal. "Away over with it—for your lives!"

"Belongee way ober, Sah," was the answer of the faithful two. The good old "Tien Pao" reeled over to her side as she swung around under the strain, then righted herself for a moment, gave a great forward plunge and with a crash like a thunder-bolt landed right in the centre of the reef.

"Full speed astern—full speed astern!" The gongs rang out in the engine-room and the propellors did their best, but it was too late. The steamer shook like a leaf but refused to budge—she was there to stay, and Captain Clarke and his officers hastened to attend to the saving of the lives in their care.

"Where is the junk?" was the very first question. "Did she clear the reef?" The fog seemed to lift like a curtain and roll itself out into the ocean; the Channel was clear from end to end and the junk had vanished into air! Not on the reef or rocks; not sailing the Channel; not on the shore—no! Gone! Dissolved like the "baseless fabric of a vision." Not a sign or trace of her remained.

"You have seen that junk?" cried the Captain to Ching and Chang. "What side he walkee?"

"Chinaman talkee him b'long all samee debbil boat—no can savee what side him walkee—s'pose him fly away, hab got debbil wings. Velly bad joss see dat debbil boat—all times makee ship reckee—velly bad joss."

Pale as ghosts and trembling all over, these poor victims of the wrath of some native divinity crouched along the deck, ready to throw themselves into the sea, when Jackson, the mate, recalled them to their senses with, "Here, Dead-Eye, you and your mate get to work here quick and help lower this boat."

Captain Clarke was, as we said, perfectly clear as to the junk. He knew it was a Ningpo coaster from the black lines and the high poop and he was very positive as to all its sails being set and as to the course which threatened his steamer. He could hardly realize the suddenness with which it seemed to loom up out of the fog nor had he any explanation to offer of its almost miraculous disappearance. But he and old "Dead-Eye," the Pilot were the only human beings who saw it! Not another person on the steamer—officer, passenger or member of the crew—saw any sign of the junk before or after the wreck. Nay, more, the testimony brought out that it was practically impossible for any vessel of that size to have been in the Channel without having been seen before or after the closing-in of the fog.

The testimony of Ching the Pilot, who was very closely questioned through the official interpreter, entirely corroborated that of the Captain, but went a little more into details. He was quite positive it was a Ningpo junk, of the large sea-going class, with three masts and high poop; all the sails were set and it was coming directly towards the steamer on a course that would certainly have struck her on the port bow if she had not at once put her helm hard down to avoid it. He saw the great goggle eyes on the junk and the tusk-like prows that made it look like some monster of the seas, but he had not been able to decipher the name. One piece of incidental description—which, by the way, seemed especially to interest the sea-faring men present at the Court—was the fact that she had three black flags flying, one on the foremast, one on the mainmast and one on the jigger. Each flag had a white arrow-head in the centre and they were flying from a bamboo framework that held them out taut and made them instantly visible and not to be mistaken for anything else. All the large Chinese shipping firms at Shanghai and at Ningpo had been applied to, but none of them knew of any junk company whose sign was the three white arrows; and so the mysterious black flags beagn to have the mingled fascination and horror of the skull-and-cross-bones of the old-time Western pirates.

The Court of Enquiry decided to take a recess of a week to enable its members to visit the scene of the disaster in person and to make further private investigations regarding the characters and histories of the principal parties concerned. No verdict had been reached, but the general opinion seemed to be that the Captain would be acquitted, because he had chosen the safer and wiser course when suddenly placed in a most difficult position that required prompt and decisive action.

And so the whole question was "thrown into the ring" and the community was left to decide for itself just what it was the Captain saw—if, indeed, he really saw anything at all. In a word, WHAT WAS THE PHANTOM JUNK? WHERE DID IT COME FROM AND WHERE DID IT GO TO? That was enough to keep all the gossips and talkers at homes, at the clubs and in the streets busy during the next ten days and to abstract from them every variety of opinion. Everyone that had ever had any thrilling experience of a "spooky" or ghostly nature trotted it out and touched it up for the occasion—and made it doubly horrible if it had been at sea and not on the land. Old skippers drew out of the sea-chests of their memories tales and stories of serpents and dragons, phantom ships and spectral visions of the deep. Some joked about it, some laughed and even ventured to ask what Captain Clarke had eaten for dinner that night, as if his vision of the junk had been merely a torture of the demon of indigestion. Some looked serious—some merely shook their heads and said nothing. It went so far that even the Public Library had special calls for volumes of the weird and gruesome, and "The Ancient Mariner" was taken down from many a shelf and read over again in the silent hours of the night.

"What of Clarke and the phantom junk?" became the test-word that divided the Coast ports from Hong Kong to Tien Tsin really into three separate classes. We will call them "A," "B" and "C," as follows:

Class A believed him to be absolutely honest and to have been the innocent victim of a temporary delusion or mental aberration.

Class B believed him to be honest but weak and his vision of the junk to have been the result of some stimulant or drug.

Class C believed him to be absolutely dishonest; to have concocted the junk story to deceive the public and to have wrecked the steamer for the sake of her insurance.

Each one of these classes had its own arguments to bring forward and its own precedents and examples, but on the other hand, each of them seemed to have been thoroughly and satisfactorily answered by the testimony of the other side. Those who knew him intimately claimed that he had never been the victim of delusions of any kind whatever, but was an exceedingly even-tempered and well-balanced man. All the stories as to the possibility of his having been intoxicated were at once ruled out by the fact that he was known to be a strict total abstainer. So when old Tompkins, the tea-broker remarked at the Club tiffin that it was nothing at all to see black junks after a spree—for he always saw red and green and painted ones with monkeys and parrots on them when he "went out to sea"—his joke recoiled upon himself.

The idea that the Captain had actually put the steamer on the rocks intentionally—which idea was only held by a very few of the residents—was based on the fact that he was known to have bought a considerable share of the Company's stock and that he had been overheard to say on one occasion that "he hoped the old girl would lay her bones on the rocks before she got much more granky." That being a very common remark, however, among the skippers assigned to the old and worn-out coasters, it failed to have much effect upon the Court.

Wide and divergent as were these opinions there was a most striking agreement upon one point, viz: that no real junk had ever appeared upon the scene and that what the Captain saw was entirely subjective. The European mind seemed to be a unit on this, but it utterly failed to shake the testimony and the obstinacy of old "Dead-Eye," the Pilot, who swore with a choice variety of Chinese oaths that what he had seen was decidedly objective.

"My talkee tlue, my no speakee lies, my no smokee opee, my no dlinkee wisky, my no go clazy makee fool pidgin. My can savee look see debbil junk come dat side. My b'longee pilotee more ten years time; how fashion you tinkee my no can savee? Chinaman Pilotee no b'longee fool."

So the public still awaited a permanent solution of the problem.

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The sea-going tug-boat "Hercules" of the Shanghai Lighter Co. had been chartered to take the Consul, the members of the Court, Captain Clarke, Mate Jackson, "Dead-Eye" Ching the Pilot, and several European and Chinese witnesses down to the Poo Toos and the scene of the wreck, and was all ready early Monday morning for the trip, when word was received by the agents asking them to hold the trip over until Friday as very important business detained the Consul and it was absolutely impossible for him to leave. Just what this urgent call for postponement really meant nobody seemed to know, but rumor had it that important evidence in the case was being expected from another port and the Consul thought it best to wait for it.

What really happened was simply this: he had come to the conclusion to send for the one man in all China who could help him to unravel the mystery, and had cabled to Hong Kong for Wang Foo, the Prince of all native detectives. Remembering his former successes in matters that had baffled the English police and his wonderful skill in getting at the real facts underlying the Chinese secretive ways he felt that the case of Ching the Pilot could be safely put in his hands, and this would undoubtedly throw valuable light on the case of the Captain. Wang Foo replied immediately, stating that he would leave on the French Mail Monday and requesting a private day's interview with the Consul before his departure for the Poo Toos.

No detective appeared at the Consulate and the Consul did not go to Police Headquarters to meet any such officer—as far as any one knew—but he did spend several hours Thursday afternoon and evening in the inner apartment of a large native drug store where a supposed physician from Hong Kong wished to explain to him in detail the merits of a remarkable new cure for the opium habit, in which cures the Consul was known to be deeply interested.

The "Hercules" steamed away promptly on Friday morning and on arriving at the scene of the wreck the whole matter was gone into most thoroughly. At the request of the Court Captain Clarke took her over the exact course that he followed on that day, showing exactly where he sighted the fatal junk and how by the sudden turning to avoid the collision he was driven right on to the "Camel's Hump." The party expressed a wish to go on board the hull of the "Tien Pao," the forward part of which was still intact, though the after half of the vessel was rapidly breaking-up. The sea was moderate enough for small boats to approach with safety and the visitors climbed on board. The Captain took them to the wheel-house and showed them just where he and "Dead-Eye" stood when the junk loomed up in front of them and he gave the order to put the helm hard ever. Not the least interested among the spectators was the Consul's new house-boy, who was accompanying him as a personal valet and who listened to every word of the Captain's with remarkable attention. Nobody, however, noticed him, nor the fact that he occasionally made notes in a little Chinese book in his sleeve, nor that he lingered behind the others when they passed out of the wheel-house onto the deck, nor that he took out a little pocket flashlight and eagerly examined every hook and corner of the room, nor that he got down on his knees and carefully searched the floor, and, finding there a few pieces of broken glass, wrapped them in his silk handkerchief and carefully tucked them away in his girdle—nobody noticed this; why should they? He was only a servant in attendance upon his master.

Nor did anybody pay special attention to the fact that he seemed to be on very good terms with "Dead-Eye," that he talked with him and smoked with him nearly all the way down and back and asked all kinds of interesting questions about a Chinese pilot's life and invited him to be his guest at the Tea-Garden-Theatre in the Nanking Road that evening—nobody, I say, paid any especial attention to these things, except the Consul himself, who after the theatre that evening had a long and secret interview with this self-same house-boy in the office and listened with eager attention to every word he had to say.

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The Court of Enquiry at His Britannic Majesty's Consulate was again in session, having been postponed a week owing to the "unfortunate indisposition"—so the papers stated—of a very important witness. The room was crowded with spectators who awaited with no little eagerness the final settlement of the case and the solution—if solution there was to be—of the mystery of the phantom jnk which had wrecked the good ship "Tien Pao".

"Captain Clarke," began Sir William Walpole, the Vice Consul, "there is one very important point which seems to have hitherto been overlooked in the examination and that is the question of the glasses you used when you saw the junk through the wheel-house window. The window, of course, was open, was it not?"

"Yes, sir, being a warm summer night, all the windows were wide open."

"You had a perfectly clear field of vision, had you not? No person was standing outside upon the deck? Nothing was in the way?"

"Nothing whatever, sir. Captain and Mrs. Duncan were on the other side of the ship, sir, just outside their cabin door."

"The smoke from the funnel was not blowing that way at all, was it?"

"No, sir, you see the wind was on the beam and all the smoke was going off on the starboard side."

"Now, Captain Clarke, please state to the Court very distinctly whether you saw the approaching vessel with your naked eyes or whether you saw it only through your glasses."

"Now that you bring that point up, sir, my recollection is that I saw it only through the glasses."

"You are quite positive about that?"

"Quite positive, sir."

"What glasses do you use?"

"A fine pair of Admiralty binoculars, sir."

"They were in good condition and perfectly reliable?"

"Nothing finer on the coast, sir."

"And you had these in your hand when you entered the wheel-house?"

"Well, now that you ask that question, sir, I believe I had lent them to Mrs. Duncan and she had not yet returned them. I just picked up the pilot's night-glasses from the shelf, sir, and used them—they're a splendid pair, too, sir."

"Yes, Mrs. Duncan says that she had your glasses in her cabin at the time of the accident and handed them to you afterwards in the boat."

"Quite right, sir."

"And were these glasses the same ones that 'Dead-Eye' the pilot used?"

"The same, sir; there was only the one pair at the wheel."

"And did you hand them to him at the time?"

"Well, you see, sir, the junk was so near us that I didn't need them, so I just passed them over to him."

"What happened then?"

"He just had time for one squint at her. He screamed out 'Devil's Wings' or 'Devil' something or other and dropped them on the floor."

"What became of these glasses afterwards?"

"I haven't the slightest idea, sir; I presume they were stolen with the rest of the loot."

Sir William at this point turned to his Chinest valet and asked him to unroll from a silken handkerchief a pair of binoculars. Handing them to Captain Clarke, he proceeded: "Does this look like the pair, Captain?"

"They seem to be the same ones, sir."

"Now please oblige me by looking through them at the garden opposite the Consulate and tell me exactly what you see."

The Captain stepped to the window and raising the glasses to his eyes cried out in a voice that startled the assemblage: *"Great Heavens! It's the Devil's own junk again a-sailing through the trees!"*

"Hand them back to me, if you please," said the Consul, and unscrewing the larger lens in the right-hand tube he held up before the Court a small piece of painted glass, exclaiming as he did so, "Gentlemen of the Court, I have the honor and satisfaction of presenting to you the original and only genuine Phantom Junk. Here it is, painted in almost miscroscopic proportions on this inner glass and any one of you can see it sailing through the trees of my garden—or up the streets of Shanghai—just as distinctly as the Captain saw it that evening sailing down on him through Black Camel Channel. Gentlemen, the mystery is solved and it only remains for me to introduce to you now the one person to whom—more than to any other—we owe a debt of gratitude for clearing it up. Permit me to present to the Court Mr. Wang Foo of Hong Kong, better known to the community as 'The Prince of Chinese Detectives,' who has consented to unravel the tale for you himself."

The Consul's valet stepped forward to the desk, quickly removed a pair of bushy eye-brows with a corresponding mustache and goatee, lifted off a cumbersome wig with a servant's cap attached, and unbuttoning a long blue house-gown re-transformed himself into the famous visitor from the Southern Colony of "Fragrant Waters". When the Court and the spectators had recovered from their surprise they instinctively greeted him with a round of generous applause, which Wang Foo most graciously acknowledged, and in a few terse sentences unfolded his story.

"Sir William and Gentlemen of the Court: I have just three important facts to lay before you. They illustrate, as usual, the fallacy—not to say the injustice—of popular inferences from a case of this kind and also the difficulty of the European mind in unravelling a tangling question when the Chinese are equally involved.

"My first and foremost pleasure is to vindicate the Captain and his faithful pilot Ching (or 'Dead-Eye') from every lurking suspicion and reflection that may rest upon them. They are equally innocent. They are not users of opium or alcohol or drugs of any kind whatever. They are certainly not dishonest and even the hint that they combined to wreck the 'Tien Pao' for the sake of the insurance is unworthy of those who made it. Nor are they victims of hallucinations. They imagined no 'subjective vision'—the junk they saw was decidedly objective, though made of delicate Chinese paints and not of sea-going timber. They simply saw what any of you, gentlemen, would have seen had you suddenly taken those glasses into your hands at that time.

"My second point involves a brief introduction into Chinese ideas of art little known as yet to Europeans. You have many of you seen the delicate snuff-bottles of crystal and of jade which are treasured so highly by our native collectors of antiques. The hand-painting is so minute that it requires a magnifying glass to bring out the details. In an ancient volume of our Empire they tell wondrous stories of these artists who were able even to picture an entire landscape in the center of a tiny crystal. 'Yiu Wei Fah Tai' is an ancient saying which refers to this: 'Through the minute we reveal the grand.' Many of the temples in the interior have sacred stones with tiny openings in them through which the devotees may behold the glories of a world beyond. In the case before us, the Temple of Nu Hai Wang (the Goddess of the Sea) has a stone of this kind through which the faithful may, by the payment of a moderate fee, behold the glories of the sea and the great junks that sail on it.

"One of these paintings is that of a great Ningpo junk known as 'The Devil's Wings' with the three white arrows of death flying from her masts. It is really used to extort money for the temple. The great tablet over the gate-way says, *'King Woo Tang Lai Yao Kwai Ling'*, which is *'He who tribute never brings, will surely see the Devil's Wings'*. Now to see the 'Devil's Wings' being the very worst luck for a native sailor, he generally pays his tribute to the Goddess promptly. A skillful duplicate of this painting of the great junk was inserted in the right-hand tube of the wheel-house glasses and with a hasty glance would give exactly the impression which the Captain and the pilot received.

"Who plaped it there and what was his object?

"Gentlemen, I come to my third and last point. It has been my pleasure to exonerate the Captain and old Ching—it now becomes my duty to point out to you the actual guilty party. He is sitting there in the second row of the witnesses' seats, and his name is Chang; he is the second pilot and known on board the 'Tien Pao' as 'The Admiral'. He had the painting made and the glass cut to fit the binoculars. He had planned to hand them to Ching the first pilot at some convenient hour of the night and by making him see the junk frighten him into going to the Temple as soon as he got ashore and making a liberal offering to the Goddess of the Sea. The Captain coming in at the unexpected moment spoiled his plans for the Goddess and put the old 'Tien Pao' on the reef, that is all. I suspected all this after my visit to the Temple with Ching and I found the glass on the floor of the wheel-house while I was disguised as the Consul's valet and so completed the evidence. Whether you can convict a man of wrecking a vessel when his only intention was to raise funds out of a fellow-sailor for a celestial Goddess, gentlemen, is a delicate point of law that you—and not I—must decide."

"May I ask you just one question, Mr. Wang, please," said Inspector Gubbins of the poolice, as he rose to place the second pilot under arrest. "What special interest could Chang have had in going to all this trouble to raise funds for the Goddess? Was he specially devout?"

"No, not at all," replied Wang Foo, with a smile. "But you see his brother is the chief priest of the Goddess, and has charge of the cash receipts, and, as is usual in China, the family divides the proceeds!"

Boy's Natural History

By M QUAD

THE WOODCHUCK.

Time was when the woodchuck was considered as harmless as a frog, but something has changed him. Maybe it is politics or the war or the high taxes. No one seems to know just what it is, but all seem to know that there has been a change.

In Wisconsin, the other day, a woman started out to go over to a suffrage meeting, leaving her daughter, eleven years old, to take care of a younger sister and brother. When the suffrage meeting had voted that the women of the country should run the whole government, this Wisconsin mother ambled her way homeward. There was joy in her heart, but it soon turned to grief. Through an open window, a chuck had made his way in through the house and an awful tragedy was the consequence. There, on the floor, lay three children half eaten up. They had been playing leap frog over the parlor chairs, when the savage monster attacked them. There was no one to heed their cries. One by one, they perished.

The chuck had left some tufts of his hair scattered around the house, so they knew it was a chuck instead of a tiger who was guilty of the awful deed. He was followed a distance of nine miles by a crowd of men and dogs, and then all trace of him was lost. He probably jumped into the water and swam across the lake.

The woodchuck has been thought all along a good-natured animal, but we can see by this tragedy that he is a creature to be dreaded. I once saw one in the backyard, behing a bunch of catnip, but as I was armed with a gun and knife, he did not dare attack me. I never walk out, neither day or night, without something to defend my life. The tiger is a dreadful animal, but the woodchuck is dreadfuller.

THE RABBIT.

We have read in books that a rabbit is a harmless animal, and is very timid in the presence of a human being. It is not true; they have deceived us, as I shall relate.

I was walking up a dark alley, one night, when a ferocious rabbit suddenly appeared. He growled; he gnashed his teeth and dug in the ground with his claws. I am a brave boy, and did not run. While he was trying to scare me off, I hunted up a brick-bat, and presently I threw it at him. It did not hit him, but aroused his anger, and the next moment he was upon me. I was thrown down and bitten thirteen times. If I had not cried out for help, he would have devoured me alive. I called at the top of my voice, and four policemen, who had been asleep, woke up and came to my assistance. By flourishing their clubs and shouting at the rabbit they made him move off, but his chops were stained with my blood. I was in the hospital seven weeks, and at times, the doctors despaired of my life. One doctor told me I was just as much of a hero as a soldier who had been down on the fighting line. The government may give me a pension, but I think not.

Let my sad fate be a warning to other boys. If you are out in the evening and see a rabbit, don't stop to fight him, even though you are a brave boy. Take to your heels and run and no one will call you a coward. Days and days have passed since I had my adventure, but I can still feel that rabbit's teeth knawing at my vitals. Had his teeth reached my heart, it would have been all over with me.